Ms. Shalala succeeded Hillary Clinton this year as chairwoman of the Children's Defense Fund, and the two are good friends. Ms. Shalala said that she has a strong health background: "I have spent most of my career worrying about the health of children."

Critics of Ms. Shalala say that she is a threat to free-speech and is too obsessed with "political correctness." "Shalala is Miss Political Correctness," said Republican consultant Roger Ailes.

Source: Andrea Stone, "Savvy Shalala Brings Head-On Style To HHS," USA TODAY, December 23, 1992, p. 6A

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SCARC ACTION ALERT -- December 29, 1992

EPA to Release Final Report on ETS

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"EPA is going to get the challenge of their lives on this report. I don't think they've ever dealt with the Tobacco Institute before. We just don't believe this thing can stand."

Thomas Lauria, HOUSTON POST, 8/10/92, p. A1

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SUMMARY

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The long-awaited EPA report on environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) is expected to be released before President-elect Clinton is sworn in. EPA Chief William Reilly is said to be determined to sign the document before the end of his tenure on January 20. The final version of the report is expected to both reaffirm and strengthen the EPA's position on the risk assessment of ETS. The report includes a separate chapter on the effects of secondhand smoke on children and shows ETS to be a known cause of lung cancer in nonsmokers.

Most significantly, the final report will make official the draft report's recommendation that ETS be classified a "Group A" carcinogen, joining a select group of the most toxic substances known to cause cancer in humans, including benzene, radon, and asbestos.

The report's section on the effects of ETS on children

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Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/xmfk0000

concludes that young children, especially those 18 months old and younger, face a substantial health risk if exposed to secondhand smoke. Exposure to secondhand smoke is responsible for between 150,000 and 300,000 serious respiratory ailments each year in young children, especially infants. Although infants are at greatest risk from ETS, the report finds that older children are also likely to be affected by exposure to ETS. Between 7,500 and 15,000 cases of respiratory ailments caused by ETS are serious enough for the child to be hospitalized, according to the report.

Exposure to ETS also exacerbates asthmatic symptoms in many of the country's 2 million to 5 million asthmatic children, and children in households where there are smokers are more likely to become asthmatic, according to the report. The report estimates that exposure to secondhand smoke causes between 8,000 and 26,000 additional asthma cases a year among young children.

The report also suggests a possible link between exposure to secondhand smoke and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), the mysterious illness that is the most frequent cause of death among infants aged 1 month to 1 year. A single cause of SIDS has yet to be identified, but researchers cite a number of studies showing "strong evidence" that infants whose mothers smoke have an increased risk of dying and that exposure to ETS might be a contributing factor. They acknowledge that the available studies do not make clear whether the increased risk is due to smoking during pregnancy or exposure to smoke after birth.

The report estimates that exposure to ETS causes between 2,500 and 3,300 lung cancer deaths annually.

Although EPA does not have authority to regulate ETS, its release of the final risk assessment has important policy implications. For example, the classification of ETS as a known human carcinogen should strengthen the case of employees who have been harmed by ETS in the workplace, resulting in a greater risk for liability of employers who do not protect workers. Additionally, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is required to issue regulations on any toxin classified as Group A, although this may be a multi-year process. Experts are currently examining the impact potential OSHA regulations would have on existing state and local legislation, including whether these laws would be preempted by weaker OSHA regulations.

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Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/xmfk0000

While the report's findings are expected to be significantly stronger than in previous versions, they are still considered by many experts to be conservative estimates. In a study published in the American Heart Association journal, CIRCULATION, researchers Stanton Glantz and William Parmley report that ETS is responsible for 3,700 lung cancer deaths per year, as opposed to the EPA report's finding of between 2,500 and 3,300. Also, the EPA report does not address the relationship of ETS to heart disease or any other cancers. Glantz and Parmley report that exposure to secondhand smoke is responsible for 37,000 heart disease deaths and another 12,300 deaths due to cervical cancer and other cancers each year. Glantz and Parmley point out that the risk of heart disease in the general population is likely to be underestimated in these studies because they do not account for workplace exposure to ETS. The EPA estimates that exposure to ETS in the workplace is about four times the typical household exposure. (For more information on this study see SCARC Action Alert, "Environmental Tobacco Smoke Responsible for 53,000 Deaths Yearly," 1/30/91.)

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OBJECTIVES

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To use the release of the EPA report on ETS to call attention to the issue and to proactively protect the report from industry attacks on its credibility.

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USEFUL QUOTES

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"They've really taken every single criticism that the tobacco companies have dreamed up, however flaky, and dealt with them. The document is a superb scientific document that the EPA can be proud of."

Stan Glantz, CHICAGO TRIBUNE, 7/21/92, p.4.

"I can't think of a more compelling reason for parents to quit smoking than ensuring their children's chances for a healthy life."

Louis Sullivan, Secretary of Health and Human Services, WASHINGTON POST, 6/19/92, p. A4.

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Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/xmfk0000

USEFUL FACTS

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ETS is responsible for between 150,000 and 300,000 serious respiratory ailments each year in young children, especially infants.

Between 7,500 and 15,000 cases of respiratory ailments caused by ETS are serious enough for the child to be hospitalized.

Exposure to ETS exacerbates asthmatic symptoms in many of the country's 2 to 5 million asthmatic children. Children in households where there are smokers are more likely to become asthmatic.

Exposure to ETS causes between 8,000 and 26,000 additional asthma cases a year among young children.

There is a possible link between ETS and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). A number of studies show "strong evidence" that infants whose mothers smoke have an increased risk of dying and that exposure to ETS might be a contributing factor.

Exposure to ETS causes between 2,500 and 3,300 lung cancer deaths annually.

Source: HEALTH EFFECTS OF PASSIVE SMOKING: ASSESSMENT OF LUNG CANCER IN ADULTS AND RESPIRATORY DISORDERS IN CHILDREN, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY FINAL DRAFT REPORT.

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INDUSTRY ARGUMENTS AND SUGGESTED RESPONSES

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Industry Argument: The method of analysis (combining statistics from different studies) was inappropriate, poorly accomplished, and made the resulting statistics quite misleading.

Response: These criticisms were dismissed by the EPA's Science Advisory Board, which thoroughly reviewed the draft report and endorsed its conclusions. The truth of the matter is that the tobacco industry is not interested in science. It is only interested in profits.

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Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/xmfk0000

Industry Argument: There are other, more serious indoor air pollutants than "ETS."

Response: Secondhand smoke is now one of only 15 substances that have been labeled as "Group A" carcinogens -- that is, proven to cause cancer in humans. Of those that are found indoors, many are used in manufacturing or are by-products of manufacturing or other processes and exist only in minimal allowable amounts. Others, like asbestos, are being removed from buildings. In contrast, ETS is the single most controllable indoor air pollutant.

Industry Argument: ETS can be controlled through improved ventilation systems in buildings.

Response: While ventilation can reduce the concentration of indoor air pollutants, the level of ventilation required to adequately clear the air of ETS is so high that this is not a practical, affordable option. The best way to get rid of ETS is to remove the source (as was recommended by the National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety and Health -- see NIOSH Intelligence Bulletin 54, June 1991.)

Industry Argument: This report is a de facto attempt to regulate smoking, which is not the EPA's business.

Response: While it is not the EPA's business to regulate smoking, it is the EPA's business to identify health and environmental hazards. Now that ETS has been identified as a "Group A" carcinogen, the only rational response is to eliminate or, at least severely restrict, smoking in public places.

Industry Argument: The report's findings on the effects of secondhand smoke on children do not take into account many other potential factors, including diet and quality of medical care, that might increase the likelihood of respiratory illnesses in children. "To suggest to parents that because they smoke, they are contributors to childhood illnesses appears designed to inject emotionalism into a scientific issue." Walker Merryman, Tobacco Institute, NEW YORK TIMES, 6/19/92, p. D19.

Response: The EPA report states that there were "consistent findings" in the studies reviewed to conclude that young

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Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/xmfk0000

children, especially those 18 months old or younger, face a substantial health risk if exposed to secondhand tobacco smoke. Besides, there are many areas where parents are required by law to protect their children from health risks through vaccinations; vaccination requirements or seat belt laws are not seen as emotional reactions but rather the responsibility of adults to protect those who cannot protect themselves. Protecting children from exposure to a known cancer-causing substance is a reasonable request to make of parents.

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SUGGESTED ACTIONS

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1. Focus on the fact that this report confirms what has already been understood:

   that ETS causes lung cancer in adults and is responsible for thousands of lung cancer deaths in nonsmokers each year, thus meeting the criteria for classification as a Group A carcinogen; and

   that ETS exposes young children to significantly greater risk for respiratory disease, including asthma.

Use this information to encourage adoption of smokefree policies in all places where children could be exposed to ETS (e.g., schools, day care centers, family restaurants, shopping malls), as well as in all worksites.

2. Contact your local press and let them know that you will be available to speak on this issue when the report is released. Offer reporters other contacts within your community, such as employers who have implemented smokefree policies, a local legislator who supports smokefree policies or the local teacher of the Smokefree Class of 2000.

3. Write letters to the editor or op-eds supporting the conclusions of the EPA report and highlighting the need for strong policy responses. Emphasize that, in view of the conclusions of the EPA report and the rating of secondhand smoke as one of the most deadly airborne toxins, it would be irresponsible for those who set policy (including employers) not to take immediate action to protect nonsmokers.

** END OF ALERT **

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Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/xmfk0000